

PCT

NOTIFICATION OF ELECTION

(PCT Rule 61.2)

From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

To:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
United States Patent and Trademark
Office
Box PCT
Washington, D.C.20231
ETATS-UNIS D'AMERIQUE

in its capacity as elected Office

Date of mailing:

28 September 2000 (28.09.00)

International application No.:

PCT/GB00/00956

Applicant's or agent's file reference:

A25642 WO

International filing date:

15 March 2000 (15.03.00)

Priority date:

24 March 1999 (24.03.99)

Applicant:

MORRIS, David

1. The designated Office is hereby notified of its election made:



in the demand filed with the International preliminary Examining Authority on:

30 June 2000 (30.06.00)



in a notice effecting later election filed with the International Bureau on:

2. The election



was



was not

made before the expiration of 19 months from the priority date or, where Rule 32 applies, within the time limit under Rule 32.2(b).

The International Bureau of WIPO
34, chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35

Authorized officer:

J. Zahra

Telephone No.: (41-22) 338.83.38

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PO 00/00956

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 G09B5/04 G09F25/00

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G09B G09F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

| Category * | Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages | Relevant to claim No. |
|------------|--|-----------------------|
| X, P | WO 99 17230 A (SCHLASBERG JOHAN) 8 April 1999 (1999-04-08) page 9, line 12-23 page 16, line 28 -page 18, line 22; figure 1 | 1-3 |
| X | WO 94 11967 A (WEEKS STEPHEN ; HAYES ROBERT (US)) 26 May 1994 (1994-05-26) page 2, line 5-14 page 6, line 16 -page 7, line 8 page 9, line 15-18 page 12, line 17- -page 13, line 10 page 14, line 21 -page 15, line 9 page 17, line 22 -page 18, line 27 figure 1 | 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8 |

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

29 May 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

06/06/2000

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Jandl, F

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PO 8 00/00956

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

| Category * | Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages | Relevant to claim No. |
|------------|--|------------------------|
| A | <p>WO 96 15517 A (VISIBLE INTERACTIVE CORP) 23 May 1996 (1996-05-23) page 1, line 12-14 page 10, line 3 -page 11, line 6 page 14, line 28 -page 15 page 19, line 3 -page 21, line 10; figures 1,2,5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">---</p> | <p>1,2,4, 6-8</p> |
| A | <p>WO 97 31491 A (RAGUIDEAU NICOLAS ;BEYSCHLAG ULF (FR); BOUTHORS NICOLAS (FR); LOW) 28 August 1997 (1997-08-28) abstract page 16, line 11 -page 17 page 28, line 11-15; figure 5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-----</p> | <p>1-5</p> |

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/JP98/00956

| Patent document cited in search report | | Publication date | Patent family member(s) | | Publication date |
|---|---|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| WO 9917230 | A | 08-04-1999 | AU | 8250098 A | 23-04-1999 |
| WO 9411967 | A | 26-05-1994 | AU | 5469794 A | 08-06-1994 |
| | | | EP | 0680678 A | 08-11-1995 |
| WO 9615517 | A | 23-05-1996 | US | 5929848 A | 27-07-1999 |
| WO 9731491 | A | 28-08-1997 | AU | 704385 B | 22-04-1999 |
| | | | AU | 1104697 A | 03-07-1997 |
| | | | CA | 2239408 A | 19-06-1997 |
| | | | CN | 1208535 A | 17-02-1999 |
| | | | EP | 0867093 A | 30-09-1998 |
| | | | EP | 0882366 A | 09-12-1998 |
| | | | WO | 9722212 A | 19-06-1997 |
| | | | NO | 982514 A | 05-08-1998 |
| | | | NZ | 323992 A | 28-10-1998 |

PCT

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Applicant's or agent's file reference A25642 WO | FOR FURTHER ACTION see Notification of Transmittal of International Search Report (Form PCT/ISA/220) as well as, where applicable, item 5 below. | |
| International application No. PCT/GB 00/ 00956 | International filing date (day/month/year) 15/03/2000 | (Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) 24/03/1999 |
| Applicant BRITISH TELECOMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY | | |

This International Search Report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This International Search Report consists of a total of 3 sheets.

☒ It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

1. Basis of the report

a. With regard to the language, the international search was carried out on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

☐ the international search was carried out on the basis of a translation of the international application furnished to this Authority (Rule 23.1(b)).

b. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international search was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

☐ contained in the international application in written form.

☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.

☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.

☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.

☐ the statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.

☐ the statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

2. ☐ Certain claims were found unsearchable (See Box I).

3. ☐ Unity of invention is lacking (see Box II).

4. With regard to the title,

☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

☐ the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

5. With regard to the abstract,

☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

☐ the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box III. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority.

6. The figure of the drawings to be published with the abstract is Figure No.

☒ as suggested by the applicant.

☐ because the applicant failed to suggest a figure.

☐ because this figure better characterizes the invention.

1
☐ None of the figures.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Applicant's or agent's file reference A25642 WO | FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416) | |
| International application No. PCT/GB00/00956 | International filing date (day/month/year) 15/03/2000 | Priority date (day/month/year) 24/03/1999 |
| International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC G09B5/04 | | |
| Applicant BRITISH TELECOMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY | | |

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.



2. This REPORT consists of a total of 5 sheets, including this cover sheet.

☐ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the report
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☒ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

| | |
|---|--|
| Date of submission of the demand 30/06/2000 | Date of completion of this report 19.07.2001 |
| Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office - P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL-2280 HV Rijswijk - Pays Bas Tel. +31 70 340 - 2040 Tx: 31 651 epo nl Fax: +31 70 340 - 3016 | Authorized officer Jandl, F Telephone No. +31 70 340 3378  |

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No. PCT/GB00/00956

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the **elements** of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17)*):

Description, pages:

1-5 as originally filed

Claims, No.:

1-8 as originally filed

Drawings, sheets:

1/6-6/6 as originally filed

2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages:
- ☐ the claims, Nos.:

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/GB00/00956

☐ the drawings, sheets:

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)):

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|------|--------|---------|
| Novelty (N) | Yes: | Claims | 3,6-8 |
| | No: | Claims | 1,2,4,5 |
| Inventive step (IS) | Yes: | Claims | |
| | No: | Claims | 1-8 |
| Industrial applicability (IA) | Yes: | Claims | 1-8 |
| | No: | Claims | |

2. Citations and explanations
see separate sheet

VII. Certain defects in the international application

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:
see separate sheet

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/GB00/00956

Re Item V

Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

Re Item VII

Certain defects in the international application

1. Citations

Reference is made to the following documents:

D1: WO94/11967 A

D2: WO97/31491 A

D3: WO96/15517 A

2. Opinion on novelty and inventive step

The present application does not satisfy the criterion set forth in Article 33(2) PCT because the subject-matter of Claim 1, 2, 4, 5 is not new in respect of prior art as defined in the regulations (Rule 64(1)-(3) PCT).

The present application does also not satisfy the criterion set forth in Article 33(3) PCT because the subject-matter of the remainder of the claims does not involve an inventive step (Rule 65(1)(2) PCT).

Claim 1 and 2:

D1 discloses a method of distributing an audio commentary for a site comprising: loading a plurality of different commentaries corresponding to different sites on telephone voice announcement platform remote from the site (page 2, line 2-14 and page 3, line 14-27)
displaying at the site a telephone number of accessing the commentary (page 12, line 22 - page 13, line 1)
in response to a call from a mobile handset (page 6, line 26-28) establishing a connection to the telephony voice announcement platform and playing the audio commentary (page 12, line 22 - page 13, line 1).

Claim 4

D1 also discloses the playing of a first portion of a commentary and subsequently, in

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/GB00/00956

response to a signal from the mobile handset, playing a further portion of a commentary (see page 12, line 9-21).

Claim 5

D1 further discloses the use of a DTMF signal (page 15, line 1-8).

The remainder of the dependent claims

do not contain any features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of inventive step, the reasons being as follows:

Claim 3

D2 discloses a similar method of distributing an audio commentary where a short dialling code (page 17, line 24-30) and a DTMF (page 13, line 6-10) signal is used.

Claim 6

The method of distributing an audio commentary of D3 discloses among other a pausing of the playback (page 19, line 3-19).

Claim 7 and 8

The method of D3 also provides communicating to the different mobile handsets of users different instructions, thereby controlling the distribution of users between locations (see page 25, line 4 - page 26, line 28).

3. Observations concerning the Regulations under the PCT

Background art

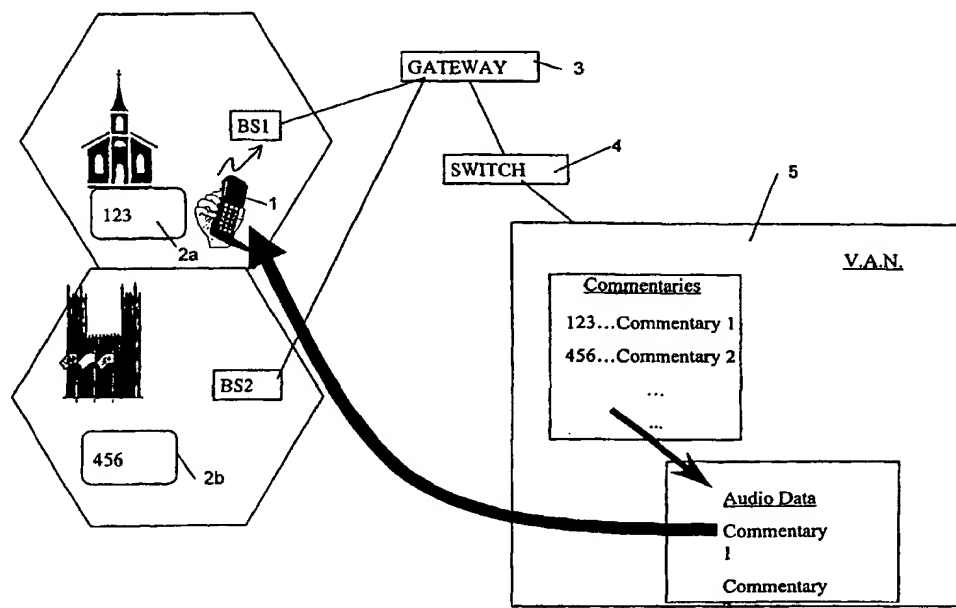
In order to comply with the requirements of Rule 5.1(a)(ii) PCT, D1 as the relevant background art should have been mentioned in the description.

The features of the claims should have been provided with reference signs placed in parentheses (Rule 6.2(b) PCT).

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| (51) International Patent Classification ⁷ : G09B 5/04, G09F 25/00 | | A1 | (11) International Publication Number: WO 00/57385 |
| | | | (43) International Publication Date: 28 September 2000 (28.09.00) |
| (21) International Application Number: PCT/GB00/00956 (22) International Filing Date: 15 March 2000 (15.03.00) (30) Priority Data: 9906830.6 24 March 1999 (24.03.99) GB 99305275.2 2 July 1999 (02.07.99) EP (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): BRITISH TELECOMMUNICATIONS PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY [GB/GB]; 81 Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AJ (GB). (72) Inventor; and (75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): MORRIS, David [GB/GB]; 64 Eldred Drive, Great Cornard, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 0YZ (GB). (74) Agent: WELLS, David; BT Group Legal Services, Intellectual Property Dept., Holborn Centre, 8th floor, 120 Holborn, London EC1N 2TE (GB). | | (81) Designated States: AE, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG). Published With international search report. | |

(54) Title: COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM



(57) Abstract

An audio commentary, for example for a tourist site, is distributed by loading the commentary on a telephony voice announcement platform remote from the site, and subsequently playing the commentary to the user via a mobile telephone handset. Different commentaries may be stored on the platform, and an appropriate one of the commentaries selected depending on the number dialled by the user.

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Codes used to identify States party to the PCT on the front pages of pamphlets publishing international applications under the PCT.

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COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

The present invention relates to a communications system, and in particular to a system designed to deliver an audio commentary, for example to visitors to a
5 tourist attraction such as an historic building or a gallery.

It is common practice, at some tourist attractions, to provide visitors with a portable cassette player and a tape carrying a pre-recorded commentary. However, this imposes additional overheads on the site operator, and is not feasible for sites where visitors may be too small in number to justify the investment in equipment or
10 staff.

According to a first aspect of the present invention there is provided a method of distributing an audio commentary for a site comprising:

loading the commentary on a telephony voice announcement platform remote from the site;

15 displaying at the site a telephone number for accessing the said commentary;
in response to a call from a mobile handset to the said telephone number, establishing a connection to the telephony voice announcement platform and playing the audio commentary.

The present invention provides a method of delivering an audio commentary
20 that removes entirely from the site operator the need to invest in and manage appropriate equipment. Instead the delivery of the commentary is provided as a service by a telephony network operator, or by a service provider connected to a telephony network. The service can be provided using the existing telephony infrastructure, and potentially with the resources of a single voice announcement
25 platform being shared between a number of sites.

Preferably the method includes loading a plurality of different commentaries corresponding to different respective sites on the voice announcement platform and playing a commentary selected depending on the number dialled by the user.

Preferably the method includes assigning a short dialling code to the
30 commentary and establishing the connection in response to the said short code.

This preferred feature enhances the ease of use of the system by providing a short code to be dialled by the visitor. The short codes may be programmed remotely by the service provider or network operator.

Preferably the method further includes playing a first portion of commentary, and subsequently, in response to a signal generated by the mobile handset, playing a further portion of commentary. Preferably the signal is a DTMF (dual tone multi frequency) tone.

5 This preferred feature gives the user additional control over the delivery of the commentary and can be used, for example, to provide separate commentaries for successive rooms of a building, or for different exhibits in a gallery. This control may be extended, for example, to allow the user to stop, rewind or fast forward the commentary.

10 Systems embodying the present invention will now be described in further detail, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a diagram showing schematically a system embodying the present invention;

15 Figure 2 shows an implementation of the system of Figure 1 in a network employing an IN (intelligent network) architecture;

Figure 3 shows an implementation of the system of Figure 1 using a switch-based voice announcement platform;

Figure 4 is a flow diagram showing the operation of the system of Figure 2;

20 Figure 5 is a flow diagram showing the operation of the system of Figure 3;

Figure 6 shows schematically a system using a PABX (private branch exchange).

25 As shown in Figure 1, a visitor to a site of interest uses a mobile telephone 1 to call a number 2a displayed in association with the site. The number might be shown, for example on a sign at the site, or in a map or guide book for the site. The call is connected through a cellular mobile network in a conventional fashion. The call is routed from a base station BS1 in the relevant cell via the cellular network to a gateway 3 to the public switched telephony network (PSTN). A circuit is established via a PSTN switch 4 to a voice announcement platform (VAN) 5. Suitable voice announcement platforms are available commercially from a number of manufacturers. For example, in the case of an implementation using an IN architecture, an Alcatel

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1410 Intelligent Peripheral voice server may be used. In a switch based implementation, an Alcatel 1411 Digital Announcement Machine (DAM) may be used. The voice announcement platform is pre-programmed with digitised audio recordings of commentaries describing a number of sights. For example, commentary 1 is a
5 description of the architecture and history of a church at the site associated with number 2a, and commentary 2 is a description of another site having a different number 2b associated with it. In this example, the dialled number is forwarded to the voice announcement platform and is used in the platform to address a look-up table which correlates different called numbers and different commentaries. The
10 audio data for the respective commentary, in this case commentary 1, is then played via the telephony network to the user.

Figure 2 illustrates a first implementation of the invention in a network employing an IN (intelligent network) architecture. In this case the PSTN switch 4 of Figure 1 is an IN Service Switching Point (SSP) arranged to implement a Service
15 Switching Function (SSF). When a detection point at the SSP is triggered, for example as a result of the dialling of particular numbers such as the number of the voice announcement, the SSP suspends the basic switching function and communicates with a service control point (SCP) 22 that implements service control functions (SCF). The SCP 22 uses an Intelligent Peripheral (IP), in this case the
20 voice announcement platform, to implement the special resource functions necessary to play announcements to the user and to respond to DTMF tones from the user.

Figure 4 is a flow diagram illustrating the operation of the system of Figure 2. In step 4.1 a call is made by the user. This may be from another network, in which case the trigger is an Initial and Final Address Message received at the SSP. In
25 response (4.2), the switch sends an INAP (Intelligent Network Application Protocol) IDP (initial detection point) message containing the called and/or calling party numbers to the SCP. In step 4.3 the SCP addresses the look-up table to determine from the data in the IDP the identity of the appropriate announcement. A connection is established to the intelligent peripheral (step 4.4) and the announcement is played
30 (steps 4.5 and 4.6). The process may then be terminated by the user hanging up. Alternatively, after playing the first announcement the IP and SCP may continue to wait for a further signal, in the form of a DTMF tone from the user. When this is received in step 4.7, the IP returns a signal to the SCP (step 4.8). The service logic

in the SCP may be programmed to play a further announcement, or to carry out other functions, such as pausing a commentary, or rewinding and replaying a commentary that has previously been played. These options may be identified to the user as a menu of options , e.g. "dial *1 to pause, *2 to rewind, *3 to step to next
5 commentary" , at the beginning of the initial commentary.

Figure 3 illustrates a second embodiment of the invention using a voice announcement platform 32 implemented at a network switch 31. In use, this system dispenses with the INAP SSP to SCP and SCP to IP signalling of the first embodiment, but is otherwise similar in approach.

10 Figure 5 is a flow diagram illustrating the operation of the embodiment of Figure 3. In step 5.1 a call is made, either directly via an access network connected to the switch, or from another network. In this latter case an IFAM (initial and final address message) is passed to the switch. In step 5.2 the call is connected to the voice announcement system at the switch. The called party number received at the
15 switch in the network setup signalling for the call is used to address a look-up table to determine the appropriate commentary in step 5.3. In step 5.4 the commentary is played to the user via the telephone network. The call may then be ended, or further commentaries may be played in response to DTMF control signals from the user (steps 5.5-5.6)

20 Although in the examples so far described, the information provided to the user has been in the form of a voice commentary only, in some implementations the audio data may be supplemented, for example, by web pages or other visual data. Also, the invention is not limited to use with cellular mobile networks. Figure 6 shows a further embodiment, in which the handsets are cordless telephones,
25 conforming to the DECT (Digital Enhanced Cordless Telecommunications) standard that are used in conjunction with a fixed line PABX. In this example, the PABX is programmed to dial the full network number and commentary ID in response to a short dialling code being dialled by the user of one of the handsets. In other implementations, such as those described above with respect
30 to Figures 1 and 2, short code dialling may be implemented as a network-based function.

Any of the systems described above may be used to implement more complex services based on the replay of commentaries. For example, the

commentary might provide instructions for a guided tour, with each section of commentary concluding with directions to the next site, or to a different part of the present site, together with an instruction to signal to the platform , e.g. with a DTMF tone, when the user reaches the next location. The paths for different users may be

5 altered dynamically under the control of the service logic in order to control the flow of visitors around a site. This flow control module may be implemented, for example, as a service control function module such as that shown in dashed lines in Figure 2. This runs on a processor forming part of the SCP. For example, in a room with exits

10 to the west and to the east, the default instruction might ask the user to proceed to the east. A count is maintained at the service platform of the number of users having been instructed to proceed to the east. If a threshold is reached such that overcrowding is likely to occur in the room to the east, then a subsequent user on reaching the end of the commentary for the room, is asked to go to the west. The service logic may cause a choice between two different fixed pre-recorded

15 commentaries to be made at this point, one commentary for a route via the east room, another for a tour via the west room. Alternatively, or in addition, the instructions may be generated dynamically, for example using speech synthesis systems provided within the VAN platform.

CLAIMS

1. A method of distributing an audio commentary for a site comprising:
loading the commentary on a telephony voice announcement platform remote
5 from the site;
displaying at the site a telephone number for accessing the said commentary;
in response to a call from a mobile handset to the said telephone number,
establishing a connection to the telephony voice announcement platform and playing
the audio commentary.
10
2. A method according to claim 1, including loading a plurality of different
commentaries corresponding to different respective sites on the voice
announcement platform and playing a commentary selected depending on the
number dialled by the user.
15
3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, including assigning a short dialling code to
the commentary and establishing the connection in response to the said short code
4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, further comprising
20 playing a first portion of commentary, and subsequently, in response to a signal
generated by the mobile handset, playing a further portion of commentary.
5. A method according to claim 4, in which the signal is a DTMF (dual tone multi
frequency) tone.
25
6. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, including pausing the
playback of the commentary in response to a signal generated by the mobile
handset.
- 30 7. A method according to any one of the preceding claims including communicating
to the mobile handset instructions for proceeding to a further location.

8. A method according to claim 7, including communicating different instructions to different users, thereby controlling the distribution of users between locations.

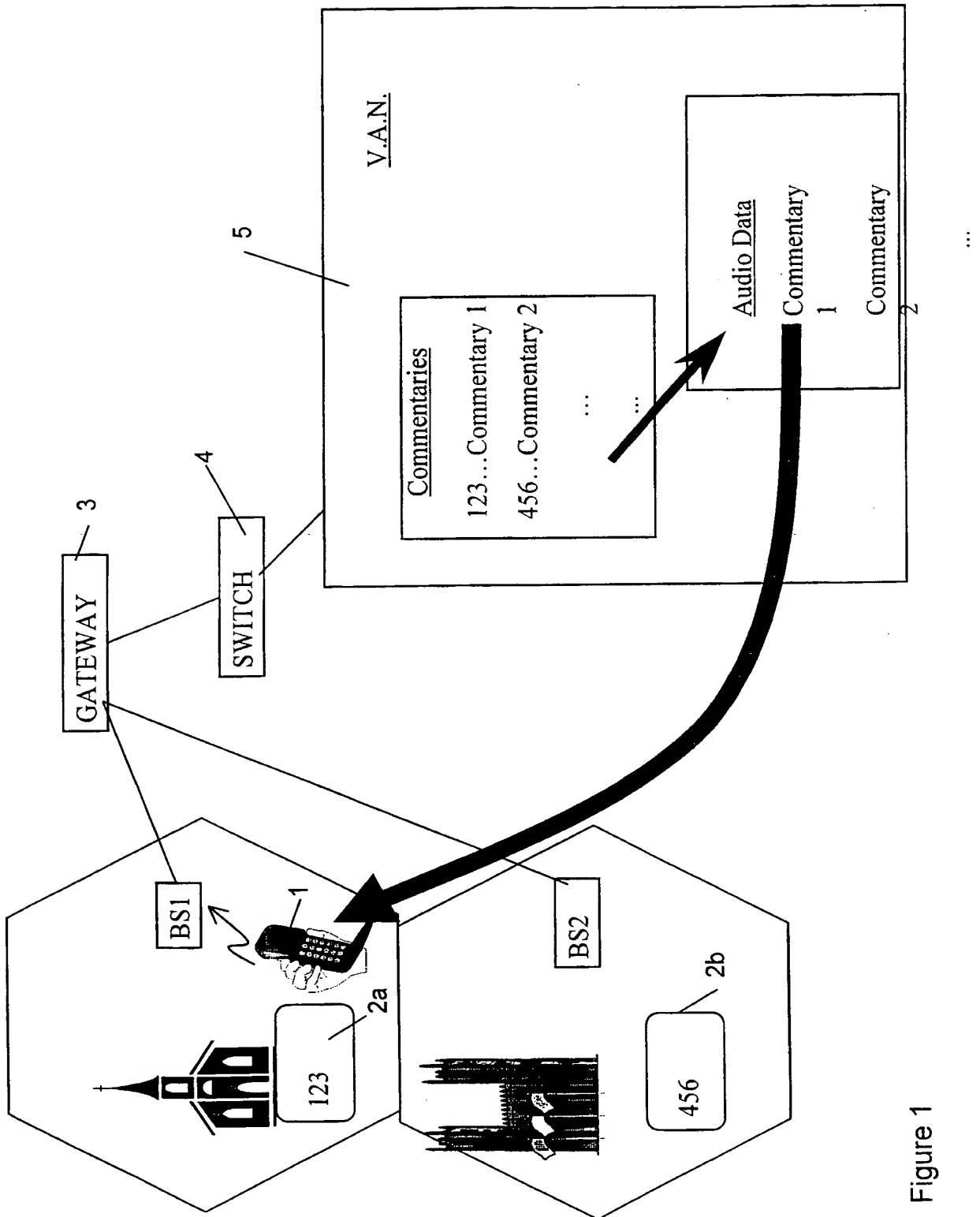


Figure 1

2/6

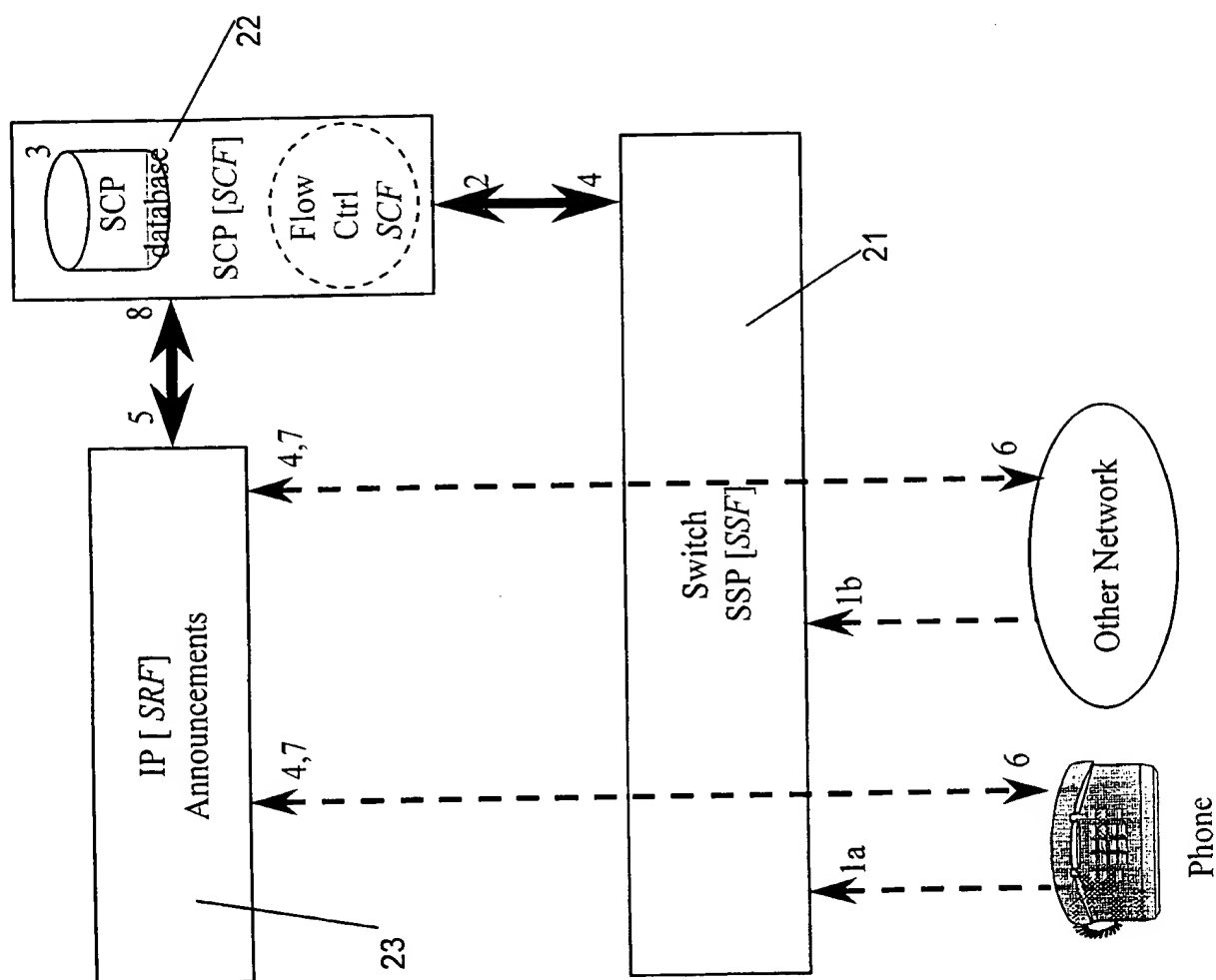


Figure 2

3/6

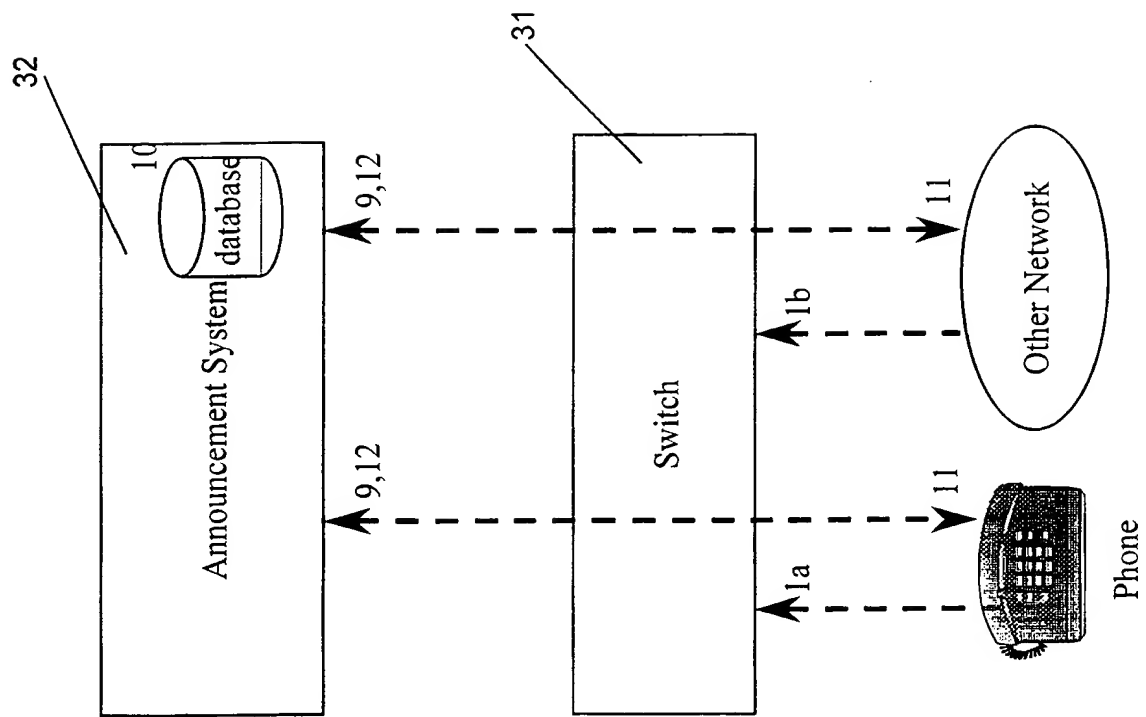
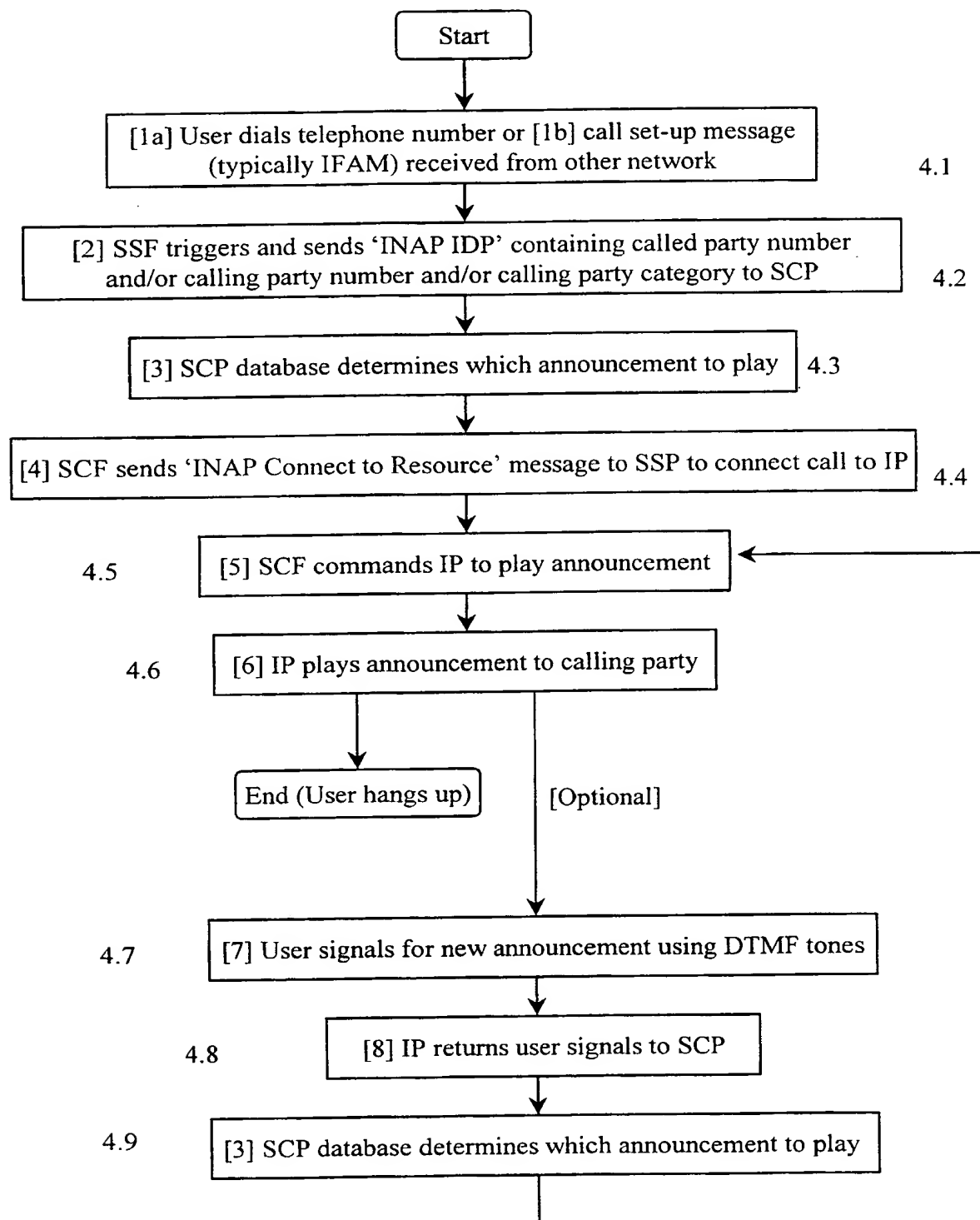


Figure 3

4/6



5/6

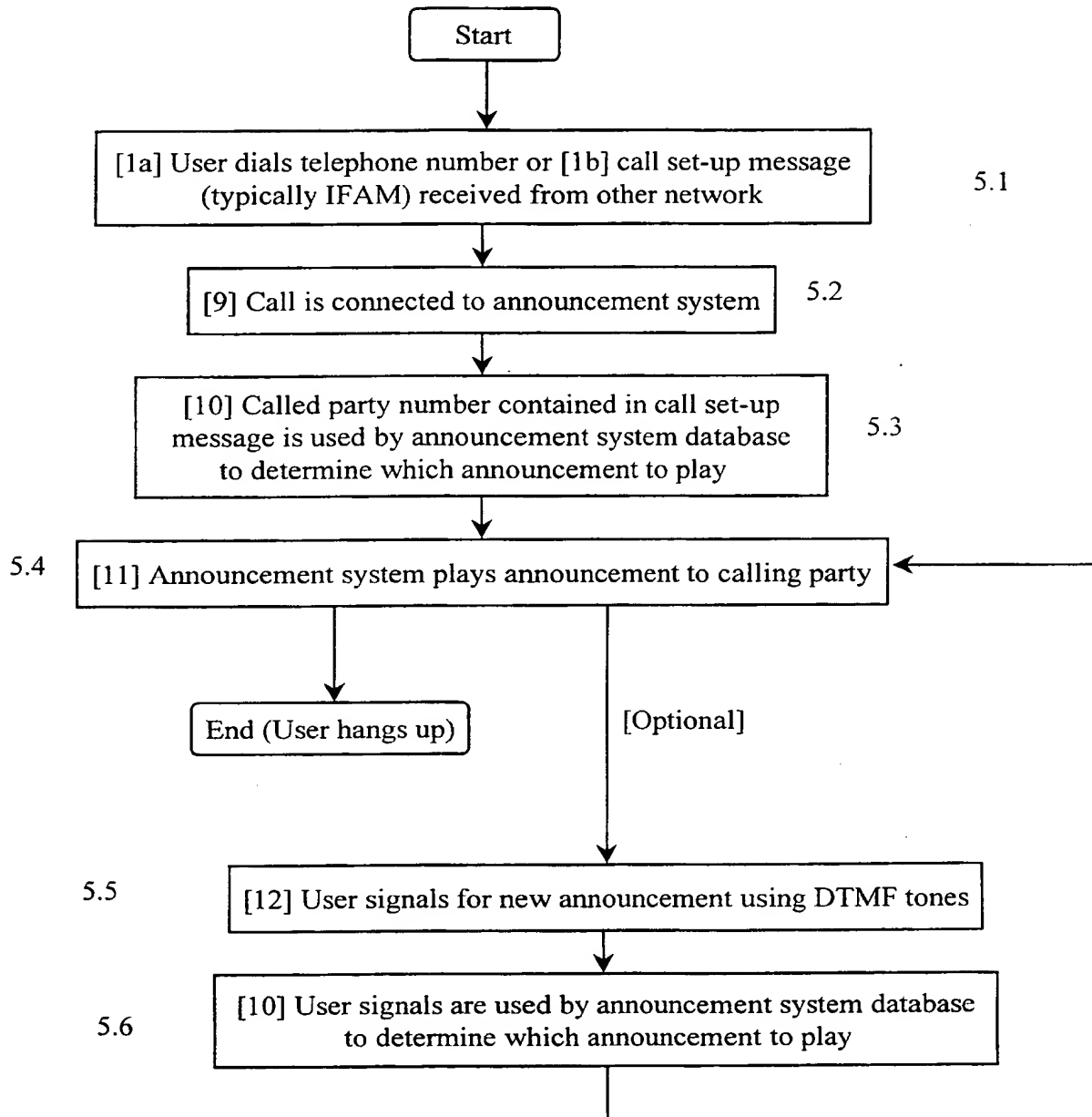


Figure 5

WYS Announcements

6/6

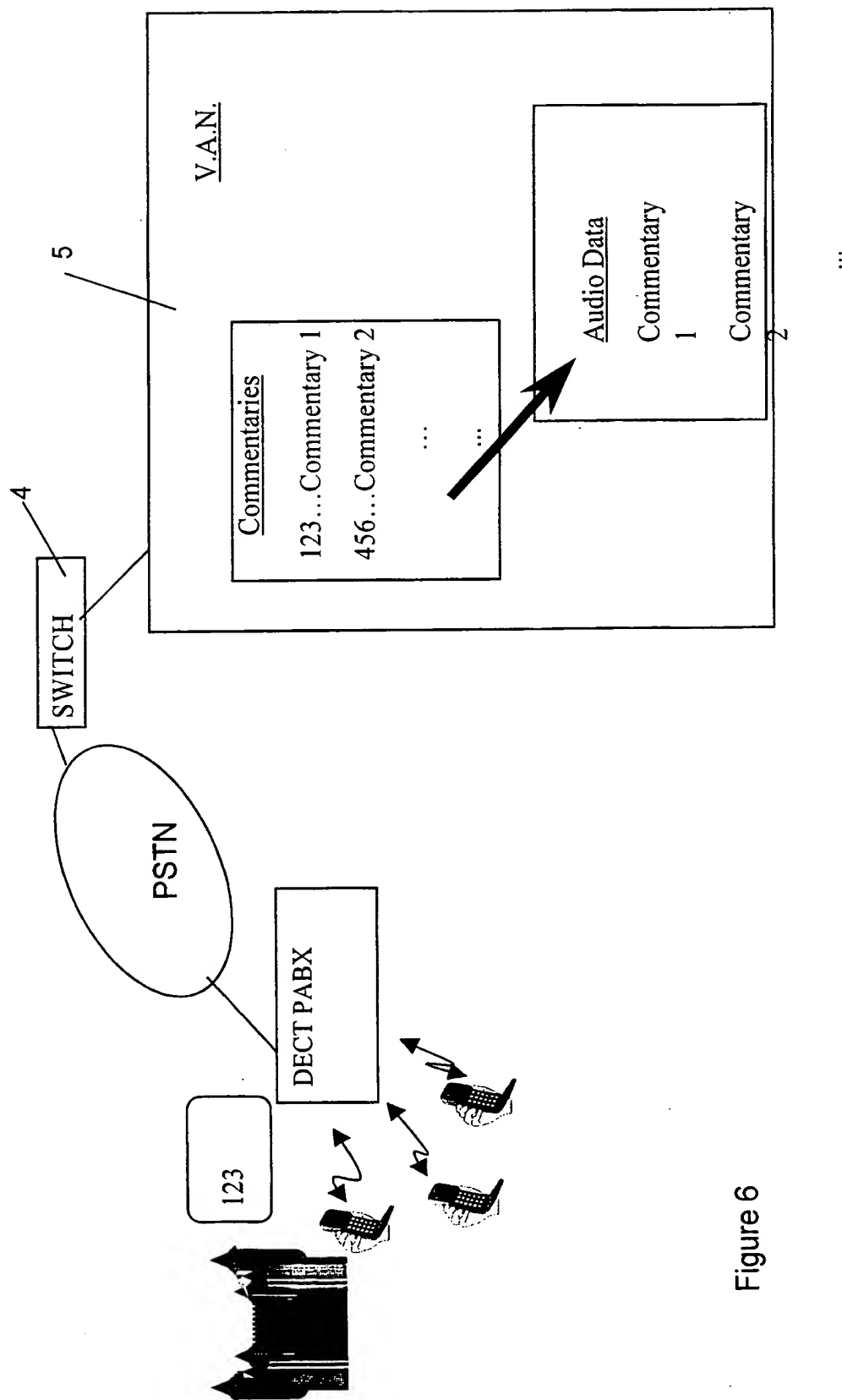


Figure 6

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/GB 00/00956

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 G09B5/04 G09F25/00

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G09B G09F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

| Category * | Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages | Relevant to claim No. |
|------------|---|-----------------------|
| X,P | WO 99 17230 A (SCHLASBERG JOHAN) 8 April 1999 (1999-04-08) page 9, line 12-23 page 16, line 28 -page 18, line 22; figure 1 | 1-3 |
| X | WO 94 11967 A (WEEKS STEPHEN ;HAYES ROBERT (US)) 26 May 1994 (1994-05-26) page 2, line 5-14 page 6, line 16 -page 7, line 8 page 9, line 15-18 page 12, line 17- -page 13, line 10 page 14, line 21 -page 15, line 9 page 17, line 22 -page 18, line 27 figure 1 -/-- | 1,2,4,5, 7,8 |



Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.



Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

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"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

29 May 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

06/06/2000

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3010

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Jandl, F

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

| Category * | Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages | Relevant to claim No. |
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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